

THE FEDERAL DIARY

Pension Plan Advances

By Mike Causey
 Washington Post Staff Writer

Congress plans to move quickly on a new federal retirement plan, tentatively approved yesterday by the White House, to cover the 400,000 federal workers hired since January 1984. One of the first orders of business is to get federal agencies, which began deducting an extra 5.7 percent from the paychecks of new hires on May 1, to stop making the deductions.

The proposed system, modeled after private-sector plans, bases benefits on Social Security, a modified civil service pension and earnings from a voluntary, tax-deferred investment plan. If it is approved by the House and Senate and then by the president, it will go into effect next January.

Under an interim system set up by Congress more than two years ago, new workers paid the full Social Security tax but contributed only 1.3 percent of their salaries toward retirement.

Feds hired before 1984 pay only the Medicare portion of Social Security, but contribute at least 7 percent to the retirement fund.

The agreement covering new hires expired May 1, after the White House objected to the compromise plan's cost and early retirement features.

Since May 1, those new employees, about half the members of Congress and all political appointees, have had to pay full Social Security and civil service contributions amounting to more than 15 percent of their salaries.

Under the new retirement system, fully covered employees could invest up to 10 percent of their salaries in a tax-deferred thrift or investment plan. The government would match up to about 4 percent of that amount for each worker.

Employees under the present retirement system could join the new plan, but would

the investment program would be tax-deferred until employees retired. It would be subject to any limitations enacted as part of tax reform.

Workers under the new system could retire at age 57 after 30 years' service but with financial incentives to encourage them to work until at least age 62. Under the current retirement system, the earliest that most employees can retire is age 55 after 30 years' service.

Congressional sources said they hope to work out an arrangement that will spare new employees from having to pay the extra 5.7 percent deduction much longer.

The extra deduction already has been programmed into many agency computers. Checks reflecting the new deductions will begin to show up this week and next.

No Butts About It

Effective today, on-the-job smoking is being banned at the Merit Systems Protection Board headquarters at 1120 Vermont Ave. NW. The ban applies to offices, reception areas, restrooms and hallways on the agency's two floors.

While many federal offices have no-smoking areas, the merit board's ban is believed to be the first agency-wide order.

Maria L. Johnson, acting chairman of the board, said that there will be a 90-day grace period when employees can leave the board's turf to catch a quick puff. About half the board's 325 staff work at the headquarters.

The board will allow administrative leave for any workers who take smoking cessation classes given by the American Cancer Society.

Part Timers' Workshop

The Association of Part-Time Professionals will hold its seventh annual training workshop today at the Commerce Department auditorium. Federal personnel officials and congressional aides will talk about employment opportunities and the benefits outlook for part-time workers. Registration is at the door. For

AROUND THE WORLD

TEMPERATURES ABROAD YESTERDAY

Observations made at Noon GMT

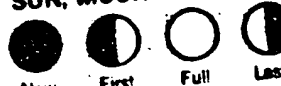
City	Weather	Time Temp.
Aberdeen	Cloudy	1 p.m. 47
Amsterdam	Clear	1 p.m. 57
Ankara	Rain	3 p.m. 48
Athens	Clear	2 p.m. 76
Auckland	Clear	Midnight 54
Beijing	—	8 p.m. 76
Belrut	—	2 p.m. 63
Berlin	Haze	1 p.m. 60
Bonn	Picky	1 p.m. 59
Brussels	Rain	1 p.m. 72
Cairo	Picky	2 p.m. 65
Casablanca	Cloudy	Noon 49
Copenhagen	Rain	1 p.m. 77
Dakar	Picky	Noon 49
Dublin	Rain	1 p.m. 62
Geneva	Cloudy	1 p.m. 79
Hong Kong	Cloudy	8 p.m. 63
Jerusalem	Picky	2 p.m. 63
Lisbon	Clear	1 p.m. 58
London	Picky	1 p.m. 73
Madrid	Cloudy	1 p.m. 80
Manila	Cloudy	8 a.m. 62
Moscow	Cloudy	3 p.m. 66
Nairobi	Tsfrms	3 p.m. 103
New Delhi	Clear	6 p.m. 68
Nice	Clear	1 p.m. 55
Oslo	Picky	1 p.m. 60
Paris	Picky	1 p.m. 77
Pretoria	Clear	2 p.m. 98
Riyadh	Picky	3 p.m. 71
Rome	Clear	1 p.m. 55
Seoul	Cloudy	9 p.m. 68
Sofia	Cloudy	2 p.m. 60
Stockholm	Picky	1 p.m. 65
Sydney	Picky	10 p.m. 64
Tokyo	Rain	9 p.m. 78
Vienna	Picky	1 p.m. 75
Warsaw	Picky	1 p.m. 75

WESTERN HEMISPHERE TEMPERATURES

City	Weather	High	Low
Acapulco	Fair	88	77
Barbados	Fair	86	77
Bombay	Cloudy	73	64
Buenos Aires	Cloudy	70	48
Bogota	Cloudy	53	35
Buenos Aires	Clear	56	32
Calgary	Snow	59	35
Caracas	Cloudy	79	68
Edmonton	Rain	62	35
Havana	Rain	84	71
Lima	Picky	73	63
Mexico City	Clear	84	57
Montreal	Clear	71	46
Nassau	Clear	80	66
Ottawa	Picky	71	48
Regina	Clear	69	42
Rio	Cloudy	87	68
Santiago	Cloudy	59	48
Toronto	Cloudy	68	43
Vancouver	Cloudy	56	41
Winnipeg	Picky	73	51

ALMANAC DATA

SUN, MOON & PLANETS



Moons Phases — GMT
 June 7 May 17 May 23 May 30

Thursday, May 15

Sun rises 5:56 a.m., sets 8:13 p.m.
 Moon rises 11:01 a.m., sets 1:30 a.m.

Mercury — rises 5:37 a.m., sets 10:33 p.m.
 Venus — rises 12:24 a.m., sets 9:43 a.m.

Mars — rises 3:11 a.m., sets 2:37 p.m.
 Jupiter — rises 9:06 p.m., sets 6:58 a.m.

Saturn — rises 10:49 p.m., sets 7:42 a.m.
 Uranus — rises in the East and set in the West

Planets rise in the East and set in the West reaching their highest point in the northern meridian midway between their times of rising and setting.

Source: U.S. Naval Observatory
 Data-Phenomena: 357-2000

DEGREE DAYS*
 DEGREE-DAYS TUESDAY: 0
 DEGREE-DAYS THIS MONTH: 48

DEGREE-DAYS THIS SEASON: 3954
 DEGREE-DAYS LAST SEASON: 4097
 DEGREE-DAYS LAST SEASON: 3798